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**NTIA ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT INVESTMENTS TO EXPAND BROADBAND
INTERNET ACCESS AND SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN HAWAII**

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling today announced two American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investments to help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve education in Hawaii. The investments, totaling \$35.9 million in grants, will fund expanded public computer centers and high-speed Internet infrastructure in areas throughout the state, connecting community institutions to broadband service and laying the groundwork to bring new or improved broadband to thousands of consumers and businesses.

The University of Hawaii System will receive a \$34 million grant to expand and enhance Internet infrastructure in the state by funding construction of 454 miles of new fiber and incorporating 1,070 miles of existing fiber into the current statewide network. The project will enhance broadband access for approximately 380 community anchor institutions– including public universities, community colleges, and libraries – to facilitate uses such as distance learning. In addition, local Internet service providers will be able to utilize the project’s open network to bring new or improved broadband service to as many as 400,000 households and 99,000 businesses.

The University of Hawaii System will also receive a \$1.9 million grant to fund nearly 700 new broadband-connected computer workstations for public use at more than 60 facilities, including libraries and community colleges, on the state’s six major islands. Residents have encountered long wait times at many of these centers due to increased demand for broadband access, and the grant will enable the centers to accommodate approximately 10,000 additional weekly users and provide computer training. The Hawaii State Public Library System, the Hawaii State Department of Education, and the State of Hawaii Executive Branch are partners in this project, which will include the installation of accessible broadband workstations at Hawaii’s Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

“These investments will improve broadband service and access in Hawaii, where too many residents and community institutions currently rely on slow Internet access due in part to the

state's topography," Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling said.

The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service are administering a nearly \$7 billion Recovery Act initiative to expand access to and adoption of broadband services. NTIA is utilizing approximately \$4 billion of that funding for the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), which provides grants to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

Today's announcement is part of the second round of BTOP grant awards, which will continue on a rolling basis. NTIA will make all BTOP awards by September 30, 2010, and has thus far announced 181 BTOP grants to benefit communities nationwide.